

SENATOR BARRETT: Nothing further, Mr. President. Thank you.

SENATOR CARSTEN: The question is then, shall the committee amendments be adopted? All those in favor vote aye, those opposed vote no. Have you all voted? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of committee amendments.

SENATOR CARSTEN: The committee amendments are adopted. Now back on the bill, as amended. Senator Hoagland, please.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President and colleagues, this bill would bring Nebraska into conformance with a system used by 42 other states in determining what maximum workmen's compensation benefits are to be. I have passed out a chart prepared by counsel of the...of Senator Barrett's Labor...Business and Labor Committee that shows the 42 states that use the state's average weekly wage as a method of setting maximum workmen's comp employment benefits, so you can all have benefit of that and see the other states that adopt this system. Now I know you are interested in the cost. I know cost is an important consideration. And the Nebraska Workmen's Compensation Court has obtained an estimate on the cost from the National Council on Compensation Insurance, one of the authorities in this area that works up cost figures for states when they have legislation like this. And I've also passed that out. I've passed a letter out, to the Nebraska Workmen's Compensation Court, that shows the cost. And they indicate that the first year cost of this bill will be 1.3 percent in terms of increased premiums, increased cost to the workmen's compensation system, when the State of Nebraska goes to 80 percent of the state's average weekly wage. And that increase would be from \$225, the current level, to approximately \$238. The letter also shows the cost for the two subsequent years, 2 percent, and then the third year 1.2 percent, for a total cost increase of about 4.5 percent. Now when you think in terms of the total cost increase of 4.5 percent keep in mind the fact that inflation is increasing at the rate of between 3 and 4 percent these years. So the minimum inflationary cost, over the same period of time, will be 9, 10, 11 percent. So, you see, it will provide for an increase that is less than the rate of